

VILLAGE OF ESTERO PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD

RULES OF PROCEDURE

The following Rules of Procedure shall control the proceedings of the Village of Estero Planning and Zoning Board.

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I. PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

- 1.1 Purpose. The purpose of these Rules is to provide for the orderly conduct of the business of the Village of Estero Planning and Zoning Board. These Rules are intended to ensure a reasonable and consistent process for the Board to consider, hear and act upon certain matters under its authority, to promote the orderly and efficient conduct of public proceedings convened to decide matters before the Board, and to ensure the fair and impartial treatment of each person who appears before the Board.
- 1.2 Authority. These Rules are adopted pursuant to the authority of the Village of Estero Ordinance No. 2015-01, as may be amended from time to time.

II. MEMBERSHIP AND OFFICERS

- 2.1 The number, qualifications and appointment of members, their terms of office and the filling of vacancies shall be in accordance with Ordinance No. 2015-01, as may be amended from time to time. These Rules provide additional details regarding membership and officers.
- 2.2 All members shall hold membership until their successors are appointed, and all officers shall hold office until their successors are elected.
- 2.3 Officers shall be Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary.
 - 2.3.1 The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Board, shall decide all points of order or procedure, and may appoint members to any committee of the Board. The Chairman shall sign all resolutions and minutes of the Board. The Chairman shall have the right to debate and vote on any issue before the Commission, except as prohibited by law. The Chairman shall

be the primary contact with the Village Manager and Board staff on matters of administration and Village support to the Board. The Chairman shall be the chief spokesperson for the board, unless another member shall be delegated by the Board to speak for the Board.

2.3.2 The Vice-Chairman shall perform the duties of the Chairman in the absence or incapacity to the Chairman. In the absence of both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman, and when a quorum is present, an interim Chairman shall be appointed from the members present in the alphabetical order of the members' last names.

2.3.3 The Secretary is appointed by the Village Manager to take minutes of all meetings, and shall attest to all resolutions of the Board. The Secretary shall provide the minutes to the Board within 15 calendar days of the meeting, or as soon after as reasonably possible. The Secretary shall administer oaths as necessary. The Secretary shall provide to attendees and collect Request to Speak cards during any meeting at which public comment may be heard, and provide them to the Chairman. The Secretary is not a member of the Board, does not count for a quorum of the Board, and may not vote.

2.4 Members shall conduct themselves according to the standards of ethical conduct required by the Florida Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees, Sections 112.311-112.326, Florida Statutes, as may be amended from time to time.

III. MEETINGS

- 3.1 Regular meetings shall be held by the Board at least monthly, at a time and place scheduled for the year at the annual meeting of the Board. The Board by vote may cancel or reschedule the regular meeting as required by exigency of the Board. Notice of any change shall be promptly posted at the regular meeting place, at the Village administrative offices, and on the Village website.
- 3.2 Special meetings are meetings in addition to regular meetings, which are called for a particular purpose or purposes, or to consider applications or matters that may need more time than is normally available at the regular meeting. Only business relating to such purpose(s) may be discussed or transacted. A special meeting of the Board may be called by the Chairman or by consent of a majority of the members of the Board.
- 3.3 All meetings of the board shall be noticed at least seven days' prior to the meeting. Notice shall be posted on the Village website, at the regular meeting place, and at the Village administrative offices. The agenda for each meeting shall be posted with the notice. The notice shall include the day, time, place of the meeting and shall include the following language:
- "If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, he will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose he may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based."
- 3.4 All meetings shall have an imposed curfew of 10:00 p.m. to be printed in the

agenda and announced at the beginning of any meeting and after any recess. If public hearings are before the Board, the public input portion of the public hearing then in progress before the Board must be completed if possible. If not, then it must be completed at the time the hearing is resumed at a later date. When public input is completed, or if no public hearing is occurring, the Board may then take either of two actions:

1. CONTINUE THE MEETING

Upon a majority vote of the Board, the meeting may continue and be continued, as prescribed in the approved motion.

2. ADJOURN THE MEETING

The Board will adjourn the meeting to a certain future time and date not to exceed fourteen (14) calendar days. Nothing herein shall prevent the Board from postponing to a time certain a public hearing if it should be apparent that such hearing cannot be concluded by the time set for adjournment.

3.5 Meetings of Committees shall be called by the Chairman thereof as may be required to conduct the business assigned to the committee. All such meetings shall be scheduled so as not to interfere with regular or special meetings, and shall be held at a time and place which will not discourage attendance by the public. At least seven days' notice and the nature or purpose of the committee meeting shall be provided to members, the Board, the Village Manager, and the public.

3.6 The presence of four (4) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. The Chairman may wait up to 30 minutes after the scheduled meeting time for a quorum to be present. A majority vote of the members of the Board present and

constituting a quorum shall be necessary to decide any item of business requiring action by the Board.

3.7 All business shall be conducted in the same order as it appears on the agenda, except that by majority consent, the Chairman may alter the order of items to be considered.

3.8 All persons who wish to address the Board on matters scheduled for a public hearing shall complete a “Request to Speak” form, on which each person shall list his or her name, home address, and the item on which that person wishes to speak. The Chairman may take measures to limit the presentation of information that is unrelated to the item or repetitive in nature, while giving due consideration of the importance of public input. At each meeting, there shall be a period of time reserved for general public comment near the end of the meeting. Public comments shall be limited to five minutes per speaker, unless the Chairman, or the Board by majority consent, allows a different time. The Board shall apply consistent time limits to all recognized to speak.

3.9 Parliamentary procedure in a meeting of the Board is informal. However, if required to keep order, the Chairman may apply Robert's Revised Rules of Order to resolve any parliamentary issue not covered by these Rules.

3.9.1. MOTIONS

Actions by or decisions of the Board shall be determined by motions duly moved and seconded and carried by a majority of the members present; provided, however, in the event a supermajority voting requirement is set forth in the Village Code of Ordinances, said supermajority voting requirement shall control.

3.9.2. DEBATE AND DECORUM

The member whose motion brought a subject before the Board is entitled to open and close the debate, but not until every Board member wishing to speak has spoken. The Chairman cannot, however, avail himself or herself of this privilege after debate has been closed. Merely asking a question or making a suggestion is not considered as speaking. In debate a member must confine himself or herself to the question before the Board and avoid personalities.

If two-thirds of the Board wish to close the debate they can do so by motion ordering either "the previous question" or "the closing of debate at a certain time." These motions require a two-thirds vote, as they suspend fundamental right of every member to have every question fully discussed before it is finally disposed of.

3.9.3. VOTING

All members shall vote on all questions, unless that member has a conflict of interest as defined in Section 112.3143, Florida Statutes, as may be amended from time to time. No one can vote or participate in debate or discussion on an item at public hearing or a question or a proposal in which that member, or that member's family or business associate, has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest. If such is the case, the member shall file a "Conflict of Interest" form.

The customary method of taking a vote shall be by roll call (yeas and nays). The vote may be taken by show of hands or voice or by general consent.

When a quorum is present, a majority vote is sufficient for the adoption of any motion that is in order. On a tie vote the motion is lost. A member has the

right to change his or her vote up to the time the vote is formally announced. After that, he or she can make the change only by permission of the Board, which may be given by general consent; that is, by no members objecting when the Chairman inquires if anyone objects. If objection is made, a motion may be made to grant the permission, which motion is undebatable.

3.9.4. YEAS AND NAYS OR ROLL CALL

When a vote is to be taken by yeas and nays the Chairman puts the question in a form similar to this: "As many as are in favor of the question will, as their names are called, answer yes (or yea); those opposed will answer no (or nay)." The Chairman shall then direct the Secretary to call the roll. The Secretary calls the roll, and each member as his or her name is called, answers yes or no.

A motion to approve, when defeated by a voice or a roll call vote, shall be considered as a motion to deny which was approved by a voice or roll call vote. A motion to deny, when defeated by a voice or a roll call vote, shall not be considered as a motion to approve. In this instance there must be placed before the Board a motion to approve.

3.9.5 RECESS

The Chairman may call a recess for a reasonable time. If there is an objection, the Chairman is obliged to call for a motion which must be seconded to determine the result by a majority vote. This is not debatable, but is amendable as to time. The length of time of the recess and the time the meetings will be reconvened must be announced before recessing.

IV. REGULAR MEETING AGENDA ORDER

4.1 The standard form agenda which delineates the order of business to come before the Board during regular meetings shall be as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Business
 - a. Approval of Minutes
 - b. Consent Agenda
 - c. Unfinished Business
 - d. Public Hearing(s)
 - e. Workshop(s)
6. Public Input
7. Board Communications
 - a. Committee Reports
 - b. Chairman's Reports
 - c. Member Reports and Comments
8. Adjournment

4.2 The Board may take action without a public hearing, in the form of a Consent Agenda, as to applications that the Village Council may authorize by Ordinance to be on the Consent Agenda. Any item on a Consent Agenda must be available for public review and be noticed in the same manner as other applications for the Board's consideration. The Applicant must approve the placement of the item on the Consent Agenda in lieu of a full public hearing. At the beginning of the meeting during the Approval of the Agenda, any member of the Board may request that an item be taken off the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda for Board action.

V. CONDUCT OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

A general procedure shall be followed in conducting public hearings. In matters other than the Board's review and recommendation on Comprehensive Plan amendments and changes to the text of the Land Development Code, public hearings will be conducted as

quasi-judicial hearings. The order of conduct shall be as follows:

- 5.1 The Chairman shall announce the public hearing by reading the application number, stating the significant purpose of the hearing and identifying the applicant.
- 5.2 The Secretary shall read the title of any proposed Resolution.
- 5.3 In the case of a quasi-judicial hearing, the Chairman shall direct the Secretary to administer the oath to the Village staff members and to those persons who intend to participate in the hearing.
- 5.4 In the case of a quasi-judicial hearing, the Board members shall disclose any ex-parte communications. Any member who has a conflict of interest shall declare the conflict.
- 5.5 The Chairman shall then open the public hearing for public input with a statement declaring the rules under which the hearing will be conducted, as follows:
 - 5.5.1 The Chairman shall then introduce the staff representative from the Village who will present an overview and introduction to the case under consideration.
 - 5.5.2 The Applicant (if any) may present such relevant material, evidence and statements as the Applicant deems would be of assistance to the Board. During the Applicant's presentation in a quasi-judicial land use proceeding, only members of the Board shall ask questions.
 - 5.5.3 After the Applicant's presentation, the Chairman shall then introduce the staff representative from the Village who will present the case under

consideration. The representative shall have prepared a comprehensive report based upon material facts available to him or her immediately prior to the hearing. The report shall contain all materials, diagrams, slides, drawings, documents and staff reports pertinent to the subject. The presentation shall include all public input received prior to the hearing. The staff shall present a recommendation and summarize differences, if any, between the Applicant's proposal and the staff recommendation.

5.5.4 After the staff's presentation, all other interested persons may then present pertinent information and/or views to the Board. During such presentations in a quasi-judicial hearing, only members of the Board shall ask questions.

5.5.5 Any individual who presents written or oral testimony on behalf of a civic association, homeowners association, civic entity, or other organization must state for the record at the outset of his or her presentation whether the organization has authorized the substance of the testimony. The Chairman may allow persons who represent such organizations additional time for presentation.

5.5.6 After the Applicant, staff, and all persons have made their presentations in a quasi-judicial hearing, the Board shall determine which persons, if any, in addition to the Applicant and the Village staff, shall be considered parties in the matter. All such parties or their counsel shall be permitted to cross-examine participants in the hearing, including the staff and the Applicant, in the order of their appearance at the hearing. Anyone who

testifies at a quasi-judicial hearing shall remain until the conclusion of the hearing in order to be available for cross examination.

5.5.7 Each speaker will give his or her name, address and shall disclose any relationship he or she may have with the subject matter under consideration.

5.5.8 Each speaker shall be limited to five (5) minutes unless the Board shall waive or vary such requirement.

5.5.9 Order and decorum shall prevail and be enforced by the Chairman. The hearing shall not be allowed to be conducted as a debate or a political forum.

5.5.10 Any person may be represented by an attorney or other spokesman. No person serving as a member of the Board shall represent a person before such Board.

5.5.11 Should provisions of the Charter, Ordinances of the Village or other law delineate matters which shall be considered in reaching a decision, the presentation to the Board and the deliberations of the Board shall be reasonably restricted to such considerations.

5.5.12 The Applicant (if any) may, before the close of the public hearing, present a brief rebuttal with a time limit to be determined by the Board.

5.5.13 At any time after convening a public hearing, the Board may recess the hearing and continue it to another date, place and time. Any Board member may move to continue a hearing. A motion to recess the public hearing and continue it at another time must be approved by a vote of a

majority of the members of the Board present and voting. If the date, time and place of a continued hearing are not announced during the public hearing that is continued, the date, time and place of the rescheduled hearing must be noticed as for the original hearing.

- 5.6 The Chairman shall close the public hearing and then open the floor for Board member discussion, motions, debate and vote for its report and recommendation to the Village Council, or its decision, as applicable. Any motion to approve an Application with conditions must specify the conditions to which the approval is subject.
- 5.7 At the discretion of the Chairman, with the consent of a majority of the other Board Members who are present, the Applicant or members of the public or staff, or any or all of them, may be requested or permitted to comment further upon the matter being considered.
- 5.8 In making its recommendation or decision, the Board shall consider the evidence in the record, the public's input and any recommendations of the Village staff. The Chairman, with the advice of the Board attorney, may rule on any objections to admission of any irrelevant or immaterial evidence, but the public hearing need not conform strictly to the rules of evidence or procedure that govern judicial proceedings. On all decisions made in a quasi-judicial proceeding, the Board's decision shall be based on competent substantial evidence in the record of the proceeding, and the applicable law.
- 5.9 The Board's decision or its recommendation to the Village Council, as applicable, shall be embodied in a Resolution. Resolutions that are not adopted at the date of

the public hearing held for the matter considered in the Resolution may be placed on the Board's Consent Agenda at the next meeting. A Resolution is considered rendered when signed by the Chairman and attested by the Secretary.

- 5.10 Action of the Board may reconsidered at the same meeting or the very next meeting only upon motion by a Board member who voted on the prevailing side of the question and with a concurrence of a majority of those present. Adoption of a motion to reconsider shall rescind the action reconsidered. A motion to reconsider, whenever made, shall not be considered unless at least the same number of Board members is present as participated in the vote under consideration, or upon affirmative vote of the majority of the membership of the Board.

VI. AMENDMENTS

These Rules of Procedure may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board by and affirmative vote of five (5) of the members serving at that time. An amendment, having been adopted, goes into effect immediately upon its adoption, unless the motion to adopt specifies a time for its going into effect.

VII. EFFECTIVE DATE

These Rules of Procedure originally adopted June 30, 2015 are effective as amended on October 11, 2016.